

**Ten Successful Steps for Fasting:**

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**Introduction:**

It is my desire as your pastor to see you grow in the Lord. One sure way is to become a person of prayer. I want all of us to become a man and a woman of prayer.

Why fasting and prayer important? Because fasting and prayer will enable you to deepen your relationship with God. Humbling ourselves by fasting releases the Holy Spirit to do His special work of revival. It will change your relationship with God forever, taking us into a deeper life in Christ and giving us a greater awareness of God's reality and presence in our lives.

Fasting reduces the power of self so that the Holy Spirit can do more intense work within us. As a consequence, He will accomplish His will in us and do supernaturally more for us that we could ever imagine.

Fasting promotes a yield-ness, even a holy brokenness, resulting in inner calm and self control. It eliminates some of the physical distraction in our lives, such as preparing and eating food, and can lead to a slower pace and more peaceful attitude.

Fasting renews spiritual vision. When we feel our life is out of control or have lost our first love for our Lord, fasting can help us focus once again on God's plan for our lives. It also inspires determination to follow God's revealed plan for our life – strengthening our resolve and keeping us on track.

Fasting can bring revival to a nation. Fasting and prayer by those who love God can usher in a mighty spiritual revival and lift His judgment upon our land.

**Step 1: Know what the Bible teaches about Fasting.**

**Some Biblical Examples on Fasting:**

1. To repent of sin – As annual ordinances, Leviticus 16:19-34, Numbers 29:7-11
2. Over coming the crisis – Esther 4:6, 9:20-27
3. To receive great vision from the Lord – Moses, Exodus 34:28
4. Personal Prayer request – Hanna’s request for a child: I Sam 1:7
5. To deepen relationship with God – Exodus 34:8, I King 19:8
6. For revival of the church – Deut. 8:11
7. Repent behalf of self and the nation – Daniel 9:3
8. Before selecting missionaries – Antioch, Acts 13:1-3
9. Before selecting church leadership – by Paul & Barnabas, Acts 14:23
10. Before preaching the Gospel - Jesus, Matthew 4:1
11. To receive power from God – Apostle Paul, Acts 9:9, Gal. 1:17

One: The Old Testament teaches us to Fast and Pray!

Joel 2:12

‘Even now,’ declares the LORD, ‘return to me with all your heart, with **fasting** and **weeping and mourning.**’ (NIV)

II Chronicles 7:14 (Lord speaks to Solomon at the dedication of the temple)

“If my people, who are called by my name, will **humble** themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land.”

Two: In the New Testament, Jesus teaches us to fast..

**Matthew 6:16-18**

“**When you fast**, do not look somber as the hypocrites do, for they disfigure their faces to show men they are fasting. I tell you the truth, they have received their reward in full. But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, so that it will not be obvious to men that you are fasting, but only to your Father, who is unseen; and your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will **reward you.** (NIV)

**Matthew 9:14-15**

Then John's disciples came and asked him, "How is it that we and the Pharisees fast, but your disciples do not fast?" Jesus answered, "How can the guests of the bridegroom mourn while he is with them? The time will come when the bridegroom will be taken from them; **then they will fast.** (NIV)

**Step 2: Know why you need to fast.**

**Prov 21:2** "All a man's ways seem right to him, but the Lord weighs the heart." It is the HEART issue.

**Some of Bad Motives:**

1. Pride – that says, "I did this!" It is not an accomplishment
2. Competition – John is doing it, so I will do it.
3. Spiritual Trip / Spiritual high – It is not some mystical experience.
4. Self punishment – to inflict pain
5. To lose weight – Losing weight is always the consequence, but it should never be the motive or the goal.

**Some of Good Motives:** Your motive of the fast at the end becomes the outcome

1. For spiritual renewal.
2. For spiritual Intimacy.
3. For spiritual discipline.
4. For guidance.
5. For healing – both physical and emotional.
6. For breakthrough.

7. For intercession.

**Step 3: Decide what kind of fast you need to do?**

Decide on:

- What kind of fast?  
Water only? Juice fast? Daniel fast? Sweet fast? Media fast? Shopping fast? Computer game fast?
- How many days will you fast.
- In what sequence: Dinner, Breakfast, and Lunch or Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner.
- What physical or social activities you will restrict.
- How much time you will devote to prayer and God's word.

**Step 4: Prepare yourself spiritually.**

**A. Spiritual Preparation by Repenting:**

The very foundation of fasting and prayer is **repentance**. Unconfessed sin will hinder your prayers. Here are several things you can do to prepare your heart:

1 John 1:9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. (NIV)

- Seek forgiveness from all whom you have offended, and forgive all who have hurt you.

Mark 11:25 And when you stand praying, if you hold anything against anyone, forgive him, so that your Father in heaven may forgive you your sins." (NIV)

Luke 11:4 Forgive us our sins, for we also forgive everyone who sins against us. And lead us not into temptation.'" (NIV)

Luke 17:3-4 So watch yourselves. "If your brother sins, rebuke him, and if he repents, forgive him. If he sins against you seven times in a day, and seven times comes back to you and says, 'I repent,' forgive him." (NIV)

**B. Spiritual preparation by being filled with the Holy Spirit**

- Ask God to fill you with His Holy Spirit according to His command in

Ephesians 5:18. Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be **filled** with the Spirit. (NIV)

**pleroo** {play-ro'-o} fulfill 51, fill 19, be full 7, complete 2, end 2, misc 9; Total 90  
1) to make full, to fill up, i.e. to fill to the full  
2) to render full, i.e. to complete  
3) to fulfill, i.e. to cause God's will (as made known in the law) to be obeyed as it should be, and God's promises (given through the prophets) to receive fulfillment  
\* Tense is in Present, Passive, Imperative, Count - 48

Romans 12:1-2

Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God -- this is your spiritual act of worship. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is -- his good, pleasing and perfect will. (NIV)

**C. Spiritual Preparation by Meditation:**

- Meditate on the attributes of God, His love, sovereignty, power wisdom, faithfulness, grace, compassion and others. (Psalm 48:9,10; 103:1-8, 11-13)
- Begin your time of fasting and prayer with an expecting heart.

**Hebrews 11:6** And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him. (NIV)

**D. Spiritual Preparation by Expectation:**

- Begin your time of fasting with open ears. God will speak to you.

**Acts 13:2** While they were worshipping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." (NIV)

**Acts 14:23** Paul and Barnabas appointed elders for them in each church and, with prayer and fasting, committed them to the Lord, in whom they had put their trust.

- Do not underestimate spiritual opposition.

**Galatians 5:16-17** So I say, live by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature. For the sinful nature desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the sinful nature. They are in conflict with each other, so that you do not do what you want. (NIV)

**E. Spiritual Preparation by gathering intercession:**

- Make sure you have a group of people who's going to stand by you
- Write them a letter. Send them your prayer agenda.
- Encourage them to Media Fast with you!
- Follow up by writing them Thank You card!

**Step 5: Prepare yourself physically**

Fasting requires reasonable precautions. If you take prescription medication or have a chronic ailment, consult your physician.

- Do not rush into your fast.
- Prepare your body. Eat smaller meals before starting a fast. Avoid high-fat, sugary foods and caffeine.
- Eat raw fruit and vegetables for one or two days before starting a fast depending on the length of your fast.
- If you are healthy – still if you want to see doctor, then know that Doctors don't usually approve fasting. You might want to do the physical to see if you are healthy in general sense.

**Step 6: Prepare yourself Intellectually.**

- Read books on fasting
- Get tapes on fasting.
- Make a personal folder on fasting prayer – collect information.
- Recommended Reading:
  1. Bill Bright, 7 Basic Steps to Successful Fasting.
  2. Elmer Townsend, Fasting and Spiritual Breakthrough.
  3. John Piper, Hunger for God.

**Step 7: Start your Fast.**

**A. How to begin your fast**

- Start with blessing from your family.
- Call your pastor to prayer for you as you begin
- Detox yourself from busy-ness.

**B. While you are fasting:**

1. Time: Take a day off if possible. Turn this into your one day retreat with the Lord.
2. Place: Go to your favorite spot. Prayer Center is great.
3. Avoid drugs.
4. Avoid chewing gum or mints, even if your breath is bad.
5. Limit your activity
6. Exercise moderately.
7. Rest as much as your schedule will permit. When you are tired, the most spiritual thing you can do is to take a nap.
8. Prepare yourself for temporary mental discomforts, such as impatience, crankiness, and anxiety.
9. Expect some physical discomfort like fatigue and headache, esp. if you are coffee addict.
10. Record all that God is speaking to you
11. Put yourself on a schedule  
For the maximum spiritual benefit, set aside ample time to be alone with the Lord. Listen to His leading. The more time you spend with Him, the more meaningful your fast will be.

Morning:

- Begin your day in praise and worship and Prayer.
- Do your QT.
- Invite the Holy Spirit to work in you to will and do His good pleasure according to His will.

**Philippians 2:13.** for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose. (NIV)

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- Invite God to use you.
- Pray for His vision for your life and empowerment to do His will.
- Take a note on what God is speaking to you.

### Noon:

- Return to prayer and God's word.
- Take a short prayer walk.
- Spend time in intercessory prayer.

Daniel 9:3 So I turned to the Lord God and pleaded with him in prayer and petition, in fasting, and in sackcloth and ashes. (NIV)

### Evening:

- Get alone for an unhurried time of "seeking His face."
- Avoid television or any other distraction that may dampen your spiritual focus.
- Pray with passion.

Joel 1:14 Declare a **holy fast**; call a sacred assembly. Summon the elders and all who live in the land to the house of the LORD your God, and **cry out to the LORD**. (NIV)

## **Step 8: Break your Fast.**

How you break your fast is extremely important for your physical and spiritual well-being. Many people hurt themselves physically not during but after their fasting.

- Break your fast gradually.
- Begin eating gradually.
- Break an extended water fast with fruit such as watermelon.
- Starting with "jook" (clear soup) is a great idea.

## **Step 9: Write the insights & obey His mandates.**

- Write a **final report** of all that God has said and how you have responded.

## **Seven Helpful Thoughts:**

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- 1) Put all these items into perspective mentally. Put it in your HEAD. Meditate on it w/ your HEART.
- 2) try to put them in the yearly calendar. Project them!
- 3) Pray and ask God for wisdom and guidance.
- 4) Don't try to do all the list at once.
- 5) Don't get anxious.
- 6) Push yourself over the limit on things you are working on.
- 7) Do it with PASSION.

### **Step 10: Expect results and look for them carefully.**

- If you sincerely humble yourself before the Lord, repent, pray and seek God's face, the Lord will give you fresh insights. Your confidence and faith in God will be strengthened. You will feel mentally, spiritually and physically refreshed. You will see answers to your prayers.
- A single fast, however, is not a spiritual cure-all. Just as we need fresh infillings of the Holy Spirit daily, we also need new times of fasting before God. Also, if you fail to make it through your first fast, do not be discouraged. As soon as possible, undertake another fast until you do succeed. God will honor your faithfulness.
- Expect the compound effect of the fasting.

**Oikos 21 days Daniel Fast - 2002:**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

Starts: August 11<sup>th</sup>

Ends: August 31<sup>st</sup>

I. Media Fast: All participate

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II. You Choose;

- Water only (See Pastoral staff)
- Juice fast (Follow this booklet )
- One meal (other than breakfast)
- Meat
- Sweet
- Shopping
- Others: \_\_\_\_\_

III. Making Prayer Request:

For Salvation	For Supplication
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.
4.	4.
5.	5.
6.	6.
7.	7.
8.	8.
9.	9.
10.	10.

IV. Decide when and how much you will pray each day.

\* Min. of 30 minutes a day

V. Share via E-Testimony to ‘OikosBishop@AOL.com’